

DELIBERATIVE PROCESS—DO NOT CITE OR SHARE
Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment
Spring 2013 Communication Proposal
DRAFT—FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

April 2, 2013

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ATTACHMENTS

- Press release
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- Internal Q&A
- Tribal communications plan

Secondary communication materials, time-permitting:

- Guest editorial
- Greenversations blog

Background

In April 2013, EPA intends to release its revised draft Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment for a public comment period and for a peer review follow-up to determine if EPA addressed the peer reviewers' original feedback. EPA Region 10 communications staff will coordinate with headquarters external affairs on any public outreach.

Our communication objectives are as follows:

1. Be open and transparent in the assessment process as we move forward
2. Provide information to stakeholders and the public regarding the April public comment period and explain how they can participate
3. Set expectations about the purpose and scope of the watershed assessment
4. Actively correct misinformation about EPA's work in Bristol Bay

Key Messages

- 1. EPA has released a revised draft of the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment for peer review follow up and a 30-day public comment.**
 - We received substantial, valuable feedback from the peer review and public comments last year that we used to improve the assessment.
 - EPA's goal is to determine if the revisions reflect the peer reviewers' feedback.
 - At the same time, EPA is releasing the revised draft assessment for another public review.
 - EPA's primary objective is to make sure the agency is using the best available science.
- 2. In response to peer review and public input, the revised draft:**
 - Clarifies the scope and purpose of the assessment.
 - Refines the mining scenarios and mitigation measures.
 - Provides more information on potential failures related to mining operations.
 - Focuses more on the way water moves through the environment.
 - Includes information on climate change.
- 3. After this peer review follow up and public comment period, EPA will move forward to finalize the assessment.**
 - We will review the public comments from this comment period and feedback from the peer review follow up and make final revisions.
 - We will issue a summary of our responses to all public and peer review comments when we release the final assessment.
 - EPA intends to issue a final assessment in 2013.

Desk Statement

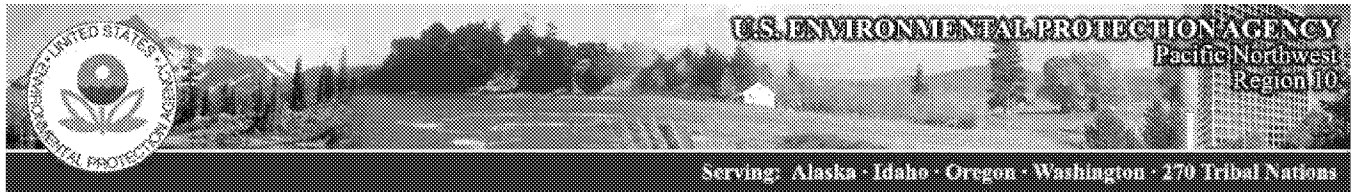
EPA has released a revised draft of the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment. EPA received feedback in 2012 from a peer review panel and public comments that the agency used to revise the original assessment. EPA is now releasing the revised assessment for peer review follow up and a 30-day public comment period.

The revised draft clarifies the scope and purpose of the assessment; refines the mining scenarios and mitigation measures; provides more information on potential failures related to mining operations; focuses more on how water moves through the environment; and includes information on climate change.

After this peer review follow up and public comment period, EPA will move forward to finalize the assessment. EPA will review the public comments from this comment period and feedback from the peer review follow up to make final revisions. EPA intends to issue a final assessment in 2013.

External Communications Schedule***NOTE: ALL TIMES ARE IN PACIFIC DAYLIGHT TIME***

DATE/TIME	CALL OR ACTION	WHO	DONE?
April 15 COB	Post to website revised assessment for peer review follow up and public comment	Charles, Maureen	
April 16	Notify congressional staff via e-mail (AK, WA)	Bill, Cindy S.	
April 16	Notify 31 tribal governments via e-mail. Includes invitation to a May 1 webinar for tribes	Tami,	
April 16	Notify tribal corporations via e-mail	Tami, Rick	
April 16	Notify NGO's and other stakeholder organizations	Palmer	
April 16	Notify Pebble Limited Partnership	Rick, Dennis	
April 16	Notify state and federal agencies	Sheila, Rick	
April 16	Send letter to 31 Bristol Bay tribes with copies of ES and a CD	Tami, Rick	
April 16	Issue press release announcing revised assessment schedule followup interviews as needed	Hanady	
April 16	Send message to listserve	Judy	
April 18	Guest editorial or greenversations blog	Marianne, Hanady, Bill	
May 1	Webinar for tribes		



EPA releases revised Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment for peer review follow-up and public comment

CONTACT: Hanady Kader, EPA Public Affairs, 206-553-0454, kader.hanady@epa.gov

(Seattle—April XX, 2013) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has released a revised version of the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment for peer review follow-up and a second public comment opportunity. The revised assessment reflects feedback from a peer review panel and over 230,000 comments EPA received when it released the original assessment in 2012.

EPA is releasing a revised assessment that clarifies the scope and purpose of the assessment; refines the mining scenarios and mitigation measures; provides more information on potential failures related to mining operations; focuses more on how water moves through the environment; and includes information on climate change.

The agency reviewed all public comments and the peer review report it received in 2012. EPA used this information to revise the original assessment.

EPA has asked the 12 original peer reviewers to evaluate the revisions made to the assessment. The intent for this review is to ensure that revisions reflect input provided by the peer reviewers. In addition, the agency is opening a 30-day public comment period that begins WHEN and ends WHEN. EPA's primary objective is to make sure the agency is using the best available science.

EPA released the Draft Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment on May 18, 2012. The agency opened a public comment period when it released the original assessment and held a series of public meetings. In August 2012, 12 independent scientists and subject matter experts met, heard public comments and completed a peer review of the draft assessment.

After this peer review follow-up and public comment period are complete, EPA will review feedback and move forward to finalize the assessment. EPA intends to issue a final assessment in 2013.

For more information on the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment, visit:
<http://www2.epa.gov/bristolbay>

To submit comments on the revised Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment, visit:
WEBSITE

Draft Listserve Message – Target Date April 15

Revised Draft Assessment Available

EPA is seeking feedback on the changes made to the draft Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment. The revised draft document is available on the EPA website for review and comment for the next 30 days.

We strengthened the May 18 draft assessment based on valuable feedback from peer reviewers, tribes and the public. The purpose of this second comment opportunity is to make sure that the revisions reflect the wealth of input we received and to insure that we are using the best available science.

In response to peer review, tribal consultation and public input, the revised draft:

- Clarifies the scope and purpose of the assessment.
- Refines the mining scenarios and mitigation measures.
- Provides more information on potential failures related to mining operations.
- Focuses more on the way water moves through the environment.
- Includes information on climate change.

After this peer review follow up and public comment period, EPA will finalize the assessment by the end of 2013. A summary of our responses to all public and peer review comments will be available when the final assessment is released.

Thank you for your interest in the EPA Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment.

FACT SHEET - Unformatted Draft for Content Review

Draft Fact Sheet Bristol Bay Public Review Opportunity
Target Release – April 2013

Revised Draft Assessment is Available for Review

The revised draft Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment is available at www.epa.gov/bristolbay for public review. Comments are invited until May XX, 2013.

Why A Revised Draft?

EPA released the Draft Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment on May 18, 2012. Following the release, we received a huge response from the public, tribes, commercial fisherman, seafood processors, the mining industry, sportsmen, members of the faith-based community, conservation organizations and others.

In August 2012, 12 independent scientists and subject matter experts also met, heard public comments and completed a peer review for the draft assessment.

The peer reviewers and over 233,000 people took the time to share their thoughts and expertise with EPA, so it was important for us to review those comments and make appropriate changes. The revised draft assessment incorporates local knowledge and new scientific information, clarifies findings, and makes additional improvements based on this substantial input.

EPA has asked the 12 original peer reviewers to evaluate the revisions made to the draft Bristol Bay Assessment. Our goal for this additional review is to make sure that these revisions reflect input provided by the peer reviewers. At the same time, we are making the revised draft assessment available for public review. EPA's primary objective is to make sure the agency is using the best available science.

How to Submit your Comments to the EPA Public Docket for Bristol Bay:

- Submit them online at www.regulations.gov Specify Docket # **EPA-HQ-ORD-2013-0189**.
Preferred method
- Send EPA an e-mail at: ORD.Docket@epa.gov. Include, **EPA-HQ-ORD-2013-0189** in the subject line.
- Fax them to: (202) 566-9744. Include, **EPA-HQ-ORD-2013-0189** in the subject line.
- Send a letter to the EPA Bristol Bay docket at:
Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Docket (Mail Code: 28221T)
Docket # **EPA-HQ-ORD-2013-0189**,
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20460
- Make a request to accommodate language or other special needs by contacting Judy Smith at smith.judy@epa.gov or 503-326-6994

Changes Made as a Result of Public Comment and Peer Review

The comments provided by the public, tribes, peer reviewers, industry, conservation organizations and others were used to clarify and improve the draft assessment. Here are some of the changes EPA made to the assessment:

- Clarified the purpose of the assessment, which is to inform future agency decisions and actions to protect and maintain the fishery resources of Bristol Bay.
- Reorganized the assessment to increase clarity, reduce redundancy, and better reflect ecological risk assessment guidelines. The first half of the assessment now provides background information, defines the objectives and scope of the assessment, and provides more detailed information on the scenarios we used. The second half evaluates risks from large-scale mining activities.
- Expanded the discussion of how the mining and road scenarios were developed and why they are a critical part of risk assessment. We also added an additional smaller mine scenario at the request of peer reviewers.
- Incorporated additional scientific and technical background materials that identify potential risks from large-scale surface mining and a history of those risks at other mine sites.
- Clarified and expanded the modern mitigation practices that we assume would be in place and working properly. Added a new appendix on compensatory mitigation.
- Expanded and clarified the mine site water balance analysis.
- Expanded the discussion of potential effects from failures of water collection and treatment systems.
- Added consideration of climate change.
- Added additional transportation corridor analyses for the risk assessment, including consideration of truck accidents, road dust, process chemicals, and invasive species.
- Added a diesel pipeline spill analysis.
- Revised culvert failures to be more realistic.

Next Steps

EPA intends to finalize the assessment in 2013 after carefully considering the follow-up with peer reviewers and additional public comment. A separate document providing a response to all comments will accompany the final assessment report when it is released later this year.

For More Information:

Website: www.epa.gov/bristolbay
E-mail: r10bristolbay@epa.gov

Join the Bristol Bay listserv to get regular e-mail updates about EPA's work by sending an e-mail message to smith.judy@epa.gov or clicking on the link on the web page.

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Internal Q&A

What is the purpose of this second comment period?

Provide an opportunity for the public to see how the draft was revised prior to final publication and make comments to fine tune the document.

What will EPA do with the comments?

Revise the draft as appropriate.

Is there precedent for this second peer review? Has EPA done this before?

Why aren't you holding public meetings?

We made a great effort to introduce the public to the Assessment through public meetings. The revised assessment is primarily a reorganization and extension of the document that the public is already familiar with.

When will EPA have a final assessment?

We plan to publish the final assessment in 2013.

What will the agency do with the final assessment?

The assessment will inform EPA's response to conflicting Tribal requests regarding use of Clean Water Act 404(c) and future EPA activity related to mining in Bristol Bay.

What are the changes you made to the assessment? Why?

The revised assessment:

- Clarifies the scope and purpose of the assessment.
- Refines the mining scenarios and mitigation measures.
- Provides more information on potential failures related to mining operations.
- Focuses more on the way water moves through the environment.
- Includes information on climate change.

EPA made these changes based on feedback from the peer review panel and public comments.